

**PROVIDENCE HOUSING AUTHORITY  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
REGULAR MEETING: Thursday, March 28, 2013; 5:30 p.m.**

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**PHA – Parenti Villa**

**25 Tobey Street**

**Providence, RI 02909**

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**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Nicolas Retsinas called the meeting to order at 5:36 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

**Present:**

Nicolas Retsinas  
Thomas Ryan  
Dolores Cascella  
John Igliozi  
Nicholas Narducci  
Ricardo Patino  
JT Taylor  
Dorothy Waters

**Absent:**

Hilary Silver  
Roger Giraud

Eight members were present constituting a quorum to conduct business. Commissioner Jackson arrived at 5:56 p.m. bringing the attendance to nine.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Chairman Retsinas asked for a motion to accept and approve the regular meeting minutes of 02/28/13, the motion was made by Commissioner Narducci seconded by Commissioner Patino. The minutes were approved with a unanimous voice vote.

The Chairman will hold approval of the minutes of the Executive Session held on 2/28/13 until the April 25<sup>th</sup> board meeting, but asked the Executive Director to give a brief summary.

Director Tavares gave a brief summary of the Executive Committee meeting. He indicated that in Executive Session he updated the Commissioners on the status of the labor union contract negotiations. He presented to them the terms and conditions along with the various union's concerns and issues. Upon returning to open session, a motion was made, seconded and approved authorizing and delegating the Interim Executive Director to finalize negotiations and to sign final contracts.

Chairman Retsinas stated that the Executive Session Minutes will be formalized and presented at the April 25<sup>th</sup> board meeting.

**RESIDENT'S COMMENTS**

A resident asked that the meeting be translated into Spanish since a majority of the tenants don't speak English. Commissioner Patino offered to translate.

**Chairman's Report**

None

**INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Director Tavares reported on the finance status of the PHA relating to the Federal Actions known as the Sequester and the continuing resolution. Our Federal Funding for public housing has been cut to a pro-ration of 83%. However, we were fortunate to have had a very conservative budget this past fiscal year which leaves us with a reserve in assisting the PHA for the remainder of fiscal year ending June 30, 2013. As we prepare our 2013-2014 budget, we will analyze and assess the necessary cuts for the upcoming fiscal year commencing 7/1/13. Presently all

financial data will be closely monitored, all expenses are being scrutinized with optional spending being either reduced, deferred or eliminated. We have implemented an immediate hiring freeze for all non-essential personnel. Every department director will be asked to take a close look at their particular departments to review and analyze cost efficiencies in programs, operations and staffing.

The three (3) primary driving factors in addressing the public housing side of the PHA are as follows:

1. The PHA will do everything possible to minimize negative impacts to the residents.
2. We will maintain descent, safe and clean housing.
3. We will continue preventative property maintenance.

The second part of the PHA program is Section 8 where the PHA assists residents financially in paying their rent on non-owned PHA property. The funding under the Sequester cuts called "Housing Assistance Payments" which is money going to the landlords, is being reduced to 94%. The funds that the PHA receives to administer the program, are being reduced to 69% of our allocation.

Fortunately, on the housing assistance side, the PHA has a surplus of \$1.3 million dollars. On the administrative side, there is a surplus of \$300,000.00. The Chairman and Director will be speaking with HUD in Boston to obtain information and access a plan in the next 30-60 days to see how we will proceed with the reduced funding in the program.

The actual cash flow projection for the programs indicates that there are funds to carry the housing program until February, 2014, and the administrative program until November, 2013.

The Chairman stated that the federal budget cuts will be in effect until the end of the year. With prudent management and with our financial oversite, we will be able to get through this serious situation, temporarily. The Chairman made it clear that he does not want to understate the potential impact the budget cuts will make beyond this fiscal year. He also wanted to reassure the tenants that the PHA will do its best to minimize the impact it will have on the residents, and thanked them for their understanding of the seriousness of the situation.

#### **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

- Budget and Finance: (Comm. Giraud)
- Resident Services: (Comm. Silver)
- Capital Improvements: (Comm. Cascella)
- Executive Committee: (Chair Retsinas) Verbal Report

The committee has commenced the process for an Executive Director search.

Commissioner Igliozi has concerns in regard to the property at Hartford Park having a basketball court possibly being constructed in the same area as before since there were problems in the past. Director Tavares assured Commissioner Igliozi that before anything is put into place they will explore other options and have an open discussion. Commissioner Igliozi added that he would like to thank Director Tavares for helping with the installation of cameras at the park and helping to make the area safer for the residents. Commissioner Taylor also voiced her concerns about a basketball court being placed in the area. She was told that a greenhouse was to be placed in that area for the residents.

Chairman Retsinas, again, assured the Commissioners that they will look very carefully at the reuse of the area and look creatively for long term use.

#### **RESOLUTIONS:**

**Resolution #4218 Approval of Providence Housing Authority's FY2013 Annual Plan.**

Chairman Retsinas stated that there will be consideration for the resolutions from the board at the end of the presentation. Director Tavares introduced Melissa Sanzaro, Director of Special Projects who gave the presentation on the FY2013 Annual Plan. Ms. Sanzaro introduced Lisa Castellanos, who assists Ms. Sanzaro in Special Projects, Parenti Villa Planning Committee and the food pantry. Ms. Castellanos thanked the planning committee members and the volunteers for attending the board meeting and also wanted to acknowledge their dedication and hard work in the community. Ms. Castellanos also translated the presentation in Spanish for the residents.

Chairman Retsinas asked for a motion to approve Resolution #4218 approving the FY2013 Annual Plan. Commissioner Patino moved to approve, seconded by Commissioner Narducci. Director Tavares called the roll, all 9 members voted in favor, none opposed, the vote passed.

**Resolution #4219 Approval of Providence Housing Authority's Policy Mandating Fire Safety Training for Residents Responsible for Fire Occurrence.**

Ms. Sanzaro also gave a presentation on Resolution #4219 with Ms. Castellanos translating. A very important note that Ms. Sanzaro stated is that there is an increase in fires in the high-rises and a decrease in participation in the program to help the residents learn how fires can be prevented. It is a violation of the tenants lease if they are involved in an intentional or non-intentional fire.

Chairman Retsinas asked for a motion to adopt Resolution #4219 Mandating Fire Safety Training. Commissioner Taylor moved to adopt, seconded by Commissioner Cascella.

Commissioner Igliozi asked the Chairman if he could make an amendment to make the Mandatory Fire Safety Training to be part of the mandatory orientation for all new residents.

Chairman Retsinas asked for a motion to move the amended resolution. Commissioner Igliozi moved, seconded by Commissioner Ryan. Commissioner Igliozi made a motion to approve the resolution as amended, seconded by Commissioner Taylor. Director Tavares called the roll, 8 members voted in favor, none opposed, the vote passed. Commissioner Narducci left the meeting prior to the vote.

**OLD BUSINESS**

NONE

**NEW BUSINESS**

As suggested by the Chairman, Jack Costa, the Director of Security gave the monthly presentation of the importance and overall operations of the security department.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Chairman Retsinas accepted a motion to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Cascella. Said motion passed with a unanimous voice vote.

The meeting adjourned at 7:16 p.m.

**Minutes Submitted and Approved By:**

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Lisa Cancelliere  
Recording Secretary

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Paul Tavares  
Interim Executive Director